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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/084,396	02/27/2002	Christopher J. Smithberg	Smithberg1	6878
24354	7590	09/24/2004	EXAMINER	
THOMAS W. HANSON, LLC 3990 S. CHEROKEE ST. ENGLEWOOD, CO 80110			NGUYEN, TAM M	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3764		

DATE MAILED: 09/24/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/084,396	SMITHBERG, CHRISTOPHER J. 
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Tam Nguyen	3764

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 8-12 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3 and 7 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 4-6 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some *
 - c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2-27-02</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Polchek et al. (5,536,227).

1. As to claims 1 and 2, Polchek discloses a protective disk (30) comprising a substantially planar outer surface (36) adapted to bear against dumbbell weights, a convex inner surface (38), and a hole (340) through said surfaces adapted to receive a dumbbell bar (see Figs. 1-4).

Claims 1 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yang (GB 2159061A).

2. As to claims 1 and 7, Polvcheck discloses a protective disk (32) comprising a substantially planar outer surface adapted to bear against dumbbell weights, a convex inner surface, a hole and a cavity as substantially claimed (see Fig. 4).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yang (GB 2159061A).

3. As to claim 3, Yang discloses a protective disk/weight as described above (see discussion of claim 1). Yang does not disclose that the convex inner surface of the disk/weight has a radius between 5-8 inches and a thickness of no more than 1.5 inches. The Examiner take Official notice thatst the prior art includes exercise weight plates having dimensions within those ranges. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to use any of an array weight plates of various sizes and weights depending on the amount of exercise desired by the user.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 4-6 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

5. Claims 8-12 are allowed.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Suarez '211

Harvey '815

Speyer '908

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tam Nguyen whose telephone number is 703-305-0784. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 9-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nicholas Lucchesi can be reached on 703-308-2698. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

September 17, 2004

NICHOLAS D. LUCCHESI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700